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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: TFGG01: SWEDEN PUSHES EU OBSERVERS TO GEORGIA

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SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED--PLEASE PROTECT ACCORDINGLY.

Poloff spoke with Johan Frisell, Head of the East European Section at the MFA. Frisell stated the following:

-- The EU's Political Security Committee has agreed to Sweden's proposal to re-hat the EU Border Support Team, currently in Georgia, as general observers (reftel). The Support Team is made up of officials from six member countries and is led by a Swede. (Note: The Council Secretariat will decide if the Team's mandate needs to be formally rephrased. If it does, then the EU Council must take the decision on re-hating. End note.)

--Frisell expects the Border Support Team agreement to be finalized in the next few days, and 30-40 EU monitors to be on the ground within 10-14 days.

-- Sweden remains concerned over the influence Russia has on observers launched from organizations in which it has membership, including the UN and OSCE.

-- At the FM meeting in Brussels on August 17, FM Bildt asked for an immediate discussion on the conflict's implications for EU-Russian relations. The majority, led by France, argued that it was not the right time to open such a discussion and they should wait for the informal meeting on September 5 in Avignon. Frisell reiterated to poloff Sweden's view that the EU Council's Conclusions on Georgia-Russia were watered-down.

-- Bildt and State Secretary Belfrage will be in Helsinki on August 20 for a previously scheduled visit. They plan to focus discussions on the Georgia-Russia conflict and perhaps Kosovo.
SILVERMAN